

Valley Women's Voice

Fall 1993



A Chronicle of Feminist Thought and Action

The Breast Health Project

by Anne Perkins

"I am stunned by what you say, Anne. I thought breast cancer was just sort of a cosmetic problem."

These were the words of an old friend George when we ran into each other at a mutual friend's fiftieth birthday party this summer. I had just told him, as we chatted about my job with the new Breast Health Project, that 46,000 women die of breast cancer each year in the United States. His words shocked and at first offended me—then I realized that George has that rare ability to admit his ignorance when confronted by it. He was as appalled as I was. What I also realized is that he'd said aloud what many others probably thought. And, of course, he had every reason to think of breast cancer as a cosmetic problem rather than the life and death issue it is. Although as a man he may have been less aware of breast cancer realities than we women, we have all been subjected to the same influences. The primary message we've been given about the disease is that it is a real tragedy that a woman should lose her

breast; much less attention has been paid to the fact that so many women also lose their lives.

Breast cancer is the leading cause of death among women age 35 to 54. There has been some very excellent research that now allows many women diagnosed with breast cancer to save the affected breast or to have one reconstructed. *Yet at the same time women are dying of breast cancer today at the same rate as they did in the 1930s.* The number of women getting the disease is rising each year, having risen some 30% in Massachusetts alone in the years from 1982 to 1989. And there has been very limited research into the causes of the disease, so we have no idea how to prevent it. Nor is it yet known how to detect it at a truly early stage.

The Breast Health Project of the Family Planning Council of Western Massachusetts is one response to these appalling realities. Started in the Spring of 1993, it is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Breast Cancer Initiative to provide both education and medical services. Although the term "early detection is a misno-

mer with regards to breast cancer (it takes eight to ten years for a breast cancer tumor to be detectable by current methods), it is very clear that the earliest possible detection can save lives. Therefore we are committed to teaching women what the three known methods of earliest detection are — which to be effective must all be used in tandem because none of them are perfect. The methods are: monthly breast self exam, annual clinical exam, and annual mammogram (for women over fifty.) While mammograms for women in their forties are now controversial, the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute recommend that the women obtain them every year or every other year.

The Breast Health project provides free educational presentations about breast can-

cer. We teach women to do breast self exam (or exploration) and encourage them to partner with a "bosom buddy" to remind each other to do it. Or they can sign up to receive a monthly postcard reminder. We offer pamphlets on a variety of breast health related subjects, house a lending library on the subject and we have an extensive file of research articles. We are committed to helping women

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WOMEN IN PRISON

Feminism and Prison Support: the Case of Aileen Wuornos

by Dena

The story of Aileen Wuornos raises important questions for feminists about self-defense, the justice system, prostitution, and how we as a political movement and community support women who are in prison for various reasons. It has become clear to me that we have a lot to learn about each of these issues.

Many of us know some version of the facts about Wuornos' situation.* The media has portrayed her as the "first female/lesbian serial sex killer" in all of history. She was a prostitute who was tried for the murder of a man named Richard Mallory, and was convicted of having committed six murders. What many of us may not know was that she is the first woman accused of being a serial killer, and the first "serial killer" ever to claim she killed in self-defense. Many of us, including the jury who convicted her, didn't know that Richard Mallory had a history of violence against women and had done time in prison for it. Many of us didn't hear about how Mallory tied her hands to his steering wheel and raped her. She has been sentenced to die in the electric chair, and currently has an appeal pending, though she has requested immediate execution. According to Phyllis Chesler,

People say that Wuornos could not have killed six times in self defense, that no one could—except of course men, in times of war. But Wuornos, a seriously abused child and a serially raped and beaten teenage and adult prostitute, has been under attack

*all her life, probably more than any soldier in any real war. ***

She has lived a life of abuse that hopefully most of us will never know—at the hands of her family, and the men who were her johns, and now the prison system.

Unfortunately, Aileen's victimization has not ended with the end of her work as a prostitute. Her case has resulted in an incredible media circus, and reportedly many people are making a lot of money off of her story. Aileen herself has been unable to make any of this money, and so she was forced to be represented by a court-appointed defense attorney.

When I began doing research for this article, I started noticing that something strange seemed to be going on among the feminists who were involved with this case. I had read a very informative piece about Aileen Wuornos written by feminist author Phyllis Chesler, and then I read a piece written by an unknown feminist author criticizing Chesler for not answering Wuornos' accusation that Chesler was more concerned with her career than with Wuornos herself. I read literature that was supposedly put out by the Aileen Wuornos Support Committee, which has disbanded. I have since learned that the existence of the Aileen Wuornos Support Committee and its disbanding were all unknown to Aileen Wuornos herself.

I also spoke with a woman from the Committee to Free Aileen Wuornos who told

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Resistance at FCI Lexington

by Laura Whitehorn

Note: Although the events described below happened more than a year ago, we thought it was important that this story be retold, in light of the fact that those of us on the outside rarely get to hear about what is actually going on inside our nation's prisons.

On 12-14 August, 1992 the first sustained act of resistance by women prisoners in the U.S. federal prison system in twenty years took place.

Here's what happened:

On Wednesday night, August 12, there was an argument between two prisoners in the central yard area ("Central Park") at about 8:30 p.m. It was over quickly and everyone was walking away, towards the housing units, because we have to be inside at 9 p.m. A lieutenant came running to see what had happened—pulling on his black leather gloves. He yelled, "Hey, you! Stop!" When no one stopped he grabbed the first Black woman that he saw, lifted her in the air, and body-slammed her to the ground. Other women yelled at him saying she wasn't even involved in the argument, but he kept on attacking her—putting his knee in the back of her neck and smashing her face to the pavement. He pulled her hands behind her back, cuffed her, dragged her to her feet, and another guard took her to the lieutenants' office.

This was witnessed by about one hundred women. They were all very upset by it, and gathered to talk to the Captain. At 9 p.m.,

all but fifteen returned to their housing units, after being assured that the beaten woman would be released back into general population, and that a thorough investigation would be undertaken.

But on Thursday morning it turned out that the woman had not been released, and some of the women who had witnessed the incident had been put in the hole ("segregation") as well. Despite the promise of an investigation, by 3 p.m. prisoners were told that the investigation was completed, and no further statements would be taken.

This was not the first instance of physical brutality at Lexington—nor, certainly, of racism. The male guards have been putting their hands on us more and more—both in frequent pat searches and whenever they want us to move, to stop, or whatever. This particular lieutenant had threatened several women with brutality. The normally high level of racism had also recently heightened, following the Los Angeles verdict and the uprisings there. Several Black women who had complained of prejudice had been put in the hole for "inciting to riot."

But this time it all struck a nerve. On Thursday word travelled: don't go in at 4 p.m. (the major daily "standing count" throughout the Bureau of Prisons). Stay out in Central Park and demand the women be released from the hole—and the lieutenant suspended.

At 3:50 p.m., when the hourly "movement" began, the scene in Central Park was tense and exciting. Usually, it's rush hour—

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Policy Statement

The *Valley Women's Voice*, a monthly feminist newsjournal, welcomes women's writings, poetry, graphics, and photography that reflect a feminist commitment to the empowerment of all women. The *Voice* provides a forum for women to share challenging and controversial ideas. We aim to communicate and strengthen bonds among women by making them visible in our pages.

The *Valley Women's Voice* is produced on a collective, consensus, volunteer basis by a group of feminists. We do not agree with all opinions expressed in the *Voice* by individual authors, but we accept responsibility for choosing to print everything in the paper.

CONTRIBUTION GUIDELINES

The *Valley Women's Voice* welcomes letters, essays, narratives, interviews, newsbriefs, poems, short stories, cartoons, graphics, and photographs. Written submissions

should be 3 to 5 pages typed, *double spaced*. Your name, address, and phone number must be enclosed with all materials so that we may verify submissions and/or contact you to discuss any necessary editorial changes. A short biographical statement is also appreciated. An author who does not wish her name to be printed should indicate this when submitting items. Please enclose a SASE if you would like materials returned to you. Submissions typed on disk are greatly appreciated. We use Microsoft Word 4.0, and our computer accepts double density disks, *not* high density. You may fax articles or calendar/announcement listings to us at (413)545-4751 (please clearly indicate VWV on each page). The decision to print materials is made collectively, and all major editorial changes are made in conjunction with the author. However, we reserve the right to make minor editorial corrections to submissions

for purposes of clarity and space constraints. Although we cannot afford to pay contributors, we do send a complimentary copy of the issue in which your item appears.

Send submissions to: *Valley Women's Voice*, 321 Student Union Building, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003. If you have ideas for future articles, or are not sure how your particular interests and talents may add to the paper, call us and let's discuss the possibilities. Our number is (413)545-2436.

CALENDAR & ANNOUNCEMENT LISTINGS

The *Valley Women's Voice* would like to print announcements and publicize events of interest to women. These events must be free or cost under \$10. (If an event cost more than \$10 it can be advertised in our classifieds section at \$0.25/word). Listings are free and should be kept to 5 lines in length. (Items will

be edited to fit space constraints.) Announcements for non-profit organizations will be given preference and additional space when it is available.

We request that Calendar listings provide the following information: name, date, time, and location of the event; cost of attending the event (sliding scale? work exchange?); the sponsor of the event and recipient of proceeds, if any; a statement about accessibility for disabled women (wheelchair accessible? ASL interpreted?); a phone number where inquiries may be directed.

Individuals and organizations may request that a photograph be printed along with a Calendar listing. A nominal fee is charged to cover printing costs. Only black-and-white photographs can be accepted. Due to space constraints, we may not be able to accept all photographs for publication, and preference will be given to non-profit organizations.

Credits

Sarah Davis
Beth Roberts
Dena
Jeannette Seward
Gwendolyn Wong
Paula Pearsall
Miranda
Carol McMaster

Our next date of publication will be December 1.

Deadline for submissions is November 7.

Deadline for classified and display ad copy is November 19.

Letter to the Collective

Dear Valley Women's Voice,

In the past several months the problem of breast cancer has received some good attention in the national media. I have important reading still to do on the subject, have you read the articles coming out? Have you cut down on your consumption of organochloride pesticides? Or thrown away your electric blanket? Have you measured the levels of your radiation exposure or worked to close another nuclear reactor? Have you reduced the stress in your life and nurtured your immune responses? Clear differences in the geographic distribution of breast cancer suggest that there are important social choices to be made as well as personal ones. Advocates and authors alike call for more research in order to understand the causes of this disease, but in the meantime let's choose lifestyles and social policies that are most likely to keep us healthy. Which choices shall we make?

I admit to not wanting to make these choices alone. I'm not interested in reducing my risk in a way that simply shifts the odds to you other seven out of eight women on campus and because I am a social creature, conforming to a large degree to the practices of my culture, it seems I *can't* make these choices alone.

I want to feel a loving and intelligent community, that recognizes the pain of the

1400 women in Massachusetts who died with breast cancer last year. I want to know that we share the inspiration of their struggles. I want to know more about the powerful struggles of the survivors. I want us together to resolve to tap the strength we might otherwise leave in reserve for private crises and share our strength to make changes now. I want to feel the loving community that compassion and awareness summon. I want a support group that sings sweet harmonies and notices my choices so that I will notice them too.

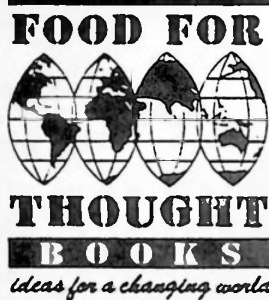
It's really not o.k. with me to leave this issue in the hands of researchers for some eventual understanding. It's really not o.k. to pass on these sidewalks and walk into a fate that says one of every eight are going to have to deal with somebody's mistakes. It's really not o.k. for us to imagine that this is a private issue if 40 of the 320 women you know will develop breast cancer.

I hope this serves to explain the motivation for our art installation and vocal performance called "Women's Answers to Breast Cancer." Thanks go to the UMass Arts Council collaborators and public participants who supported our experiment, and to all who continue the public and private investigation of what we can do to change the status quo.

Respectfully,

Sunny Miller

351 Fine Arts Center, UMass

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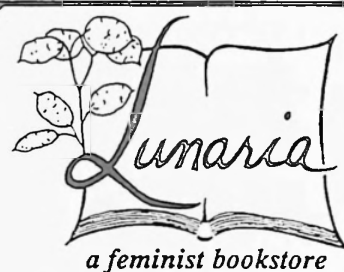
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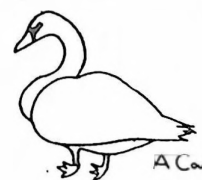
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NEWSBRIEFS

Compiled by Sharon Herbert



INTERNATIONAL PROTESTS

TO CALL FOR U.S. OUT OF SOMALIA: On October 29 and 30, there will be "International Days of Protest," a worldwide two-day protest of the U.S. war in Somalia. The International Action Center, the group organizing the protest, has denounced the latest attack by U.S. forces in Mogadishu and Clinton's decision to send more U.S. troops to Somalia. In the latest attack, "at least 500 Somali people have been killed or wounded due to attacks by U.S.-led UN forces. According to Paul Ahuja of the IAC's Veterans Group, "The soldiers know this war is not in their interest and that it only serves the financial interests of the Pentagon and the big oil companies. We are asking them to take action on their convictions and resist the racist occupation of an African country." IAC organizers say plans for the "International Days of Protest" are going very well. Demonstrations have been planned across the U.S. and in other countries. According to Stevens, the various protest have "a common demand that all U.S. and UN troops be immediately withdrawn from Somalia. We will not wait until March 1995 as Clinton asks. The billions being spent on this war should be spent here at home, on jobs and housing and education, AIDS treatment and other healthcare — not on the high-tech attempt at recolonizing Africa." For more information, you can contact: INTERNATIONAL ACTION CENTER, 39 West 14th Street, New York, NY 10011, 212-633-6646 (NY Transfer News Service, Misc. Activist, Progressive Usenet Newsgroup, 10-6-93)

RAPE OF SOMALI WOMEN IN

KENYA: The U.S.-based Africa Watch and the Women's Rights Project of Human Rights Watch charge that the Kenyan government is failing to protect Somali women refugees from rape in camps in Kenya. The human rights groups report that 192 rapes have been reported to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the past seven months. Their report, titled "Seeking Refuge, Finding Terror" requests that the U.S. earmark a portion of its \$3.5 million in military aid to Kenya for preventing rights abuses, including rape of refugees. While Kenya is to be commended for accepting Somali refugees, the report says, it has not provided them with sufficient protection nor has it prosecuted any man responsible for rape. Instead, the office of President Daniel Arap Moi has accused Somali refugee women of fabricating rape claims to "attract sympathy and give the government negative publicity". In addition, the office has insisted that police haven't received any rape reports. The report finds that Somali women as old as fifty and girls as

young as four have been subjected to violence and sexual assault. Most of the cases described involve gang-rape at gun-point. In the majority of cases, rape victims were also robbed, beaten, knifed or shot. Those women refugees who had been circumcised often had their vaginas torn or cut by their attackers. Eighty-five of the 192 cases reported by UNHCR involved women who were raped in Somalia before fleeing to Kenya. Once in Kenya, however, women are again targeted with rape as an effective form of intimidation. The report calls on Kenyan authorities to take immediate steps to end the attacks. It says there should be security patrols, special accommodation for single women or women heads of households, improved lighting, and barriers around the camps. (InterPress Service, Misc. Activist, Progressive Usenet Newsgroup, 10-6-93)

WOMAN VICE PRESIDENT

ELECTED FOR COSATU: The newly elected vice-president of the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) could not have asked for a better show of support. As soon as her name, Connie September, was announced, the nearly 1600 delegates burst out in a rendition of the Zulu chant "Igama lamakhosikazi Malibongwe," which has become a battle-cry for South Africa's black women in their struggle for recognition (literally translated, it means "people must appreciate the progress made by women in the struggle.") In the eight years since COSATU was formed, this is the first time a woman has been elected to its national executive council. Women comprised only 20 percent of the delegates attending the special COSATU congress recently held at Vista University in Soweto. The congress endorsed three women, alongside 20 other seasoned unionists, to stand as candidates for South Africa's first non-racial elections next April, further evidence the eight-year struggle for gender equality is now paying meaningful dividends. September believes she deserves the position because of her contribution to the labour movement. In addition to her position in COSATU, September is the national treasurer of the South African Clothing Textile and Allied Workers Union (SACTWU), COSATU's third largest affiliate. September says one immediate task for the COSATU executive will be to unite COSATU's 15 affiliated unions. "Our immediate task is to convert the mandate we got from the congress into a guiding torch that should steer a united COSATU during this difficult period of transition," she said. The three women whose names were endorsed as candidates for the elections are well known in the labour movement for their no-compromise approach on

gender issues. They are former United Democratic Front (UDF) rural leader Joyce Mabudhafasi, who now works for the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU); Elizabeth Thabethe from the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU); and Susan Shabangu of the Transport and General Workers' Union (T&GWU). (Misc. Activist, Progressive Usenet Newsgroup, 10-7-93)

GUATEMALAN CITIZENS THREATENED ON DEATH LIST:

Copies of a threatening letter, signed by the "Roberto Lorenzana Anticomunist Movement," were recently left beneath the doors of various popular organizations in Guatemala City. The letter reportedly recounted a series of untrue incidents and linked Supreme Court President Juan Jos Rodil Peralta and Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu Tum to the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity. The authors of the letter declared open war on these two individuals and also threatened with death the "workers of the Judiciary who are involved in the guerrilla movement." In addition, twenty other people from very different sectors of society were warned to "desist from their procommunist attitude" and were told they had seventy-two hours to leave the country or be considered military targets.

Address letters to:

Presidente de la Republica
Ramiro de Le'n Carpio
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, C.A.
fax: 011-502-2-537-472
or 011-502-2-519-702
telex: 305 5221 CAPRES GU

Ministro de la Defensa
Genral Mario Ren Enriquez
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, C.A.
fax: 011-502-2-537-472
telex: 305-5361 COMGUA GU

Procurador de los Derechos Humanos
Jorge Mario Garcia Laguardia
12 Av. 12-72, Zone 1
Guatemala, C.A.
fax: 011-502-2-512-026
or 011-502-2-537-229

(Misc. Activist, Progressive Usenet Newsgroup, 10-7-93)

WOMEN AND PESTICIDES:

Throughout the developing world, women produce most of the agricultural products and are the backbone of farming. As a result, women have daily contact with many dangerous pesticides and suffer from a variety of

pesticide-related health problems. To address this problem, Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Asia and the Pacific has started a "Women and Pesticides" campaign to compile data on the impact of pesticides on women's health, to provide information and resources to women on pesticides and to involve women's groups in pesticide issues. The first country study is on women pesticide users in Malaysia. The 1992 study found that women are usually the lowest paid agricultural workers and end up in the most hazardous jobs, including pesticide spraying. Most of these women work on a contractual basis, so their jobs are temporary, poorly paid and unprotected. They suffer from a range of pesticide-related health problems including liver, lung and kidney damage, seizures, reproductive problems and even death. Due to high unemployment and no economic opportunities, many women feel they have few options other than working with pesticides. As Meena, a pesticide sprayer in one of Malaysia's plantations explains, "After inhaling paraquat for five years, I sort of lost touch with the feeling of tightness in my chest. Well, what can I do if it is painful? I have nine mouths to feed." The study found many other problems with women and pesticides in Malaysia. Although some pesticide containers have warning labels, many of the women are illiterate and cannot read the warnings. Laws regulating the storage of pesticides are often ignored on the plantations so pesticides are frequently stored in workers' homes. It is not uncommon for pesticide containers to be recycled for domestic use, often for storing food and water. A common phenomenon in pesticide poisonings is drinking "black coffee", a dark pesticide mixture mistaken for coffee or coca-cola. Another study conducted by the Institute for Consumer Research and Education in Indonesia in April 1992 found similar problems. While weeding, harvesting and working in the fields, women came into daily contact with pesticide residues. The study also found a great lack of knowledge about pesticides - 98 of the 100 women surveyed did not know that pesticides residues remain on plants and 97 did not know the basic symptoms of pesticide poisonings. To highlight the problems, PAN Asia and the Pacific (AP) is organizing a series of workshops. PAN AP will also conduct six other country studies on the impact of pesticides on women. For more information contact: Pesticide Action Network North America Regional Center (PANNA), 116 New Montgomery Street, #810, San Francisco, CA 94105, Tel: (415) 541-9140. Fax: (415) 541-9253

(Pesticide Action Network, Misc. Activist, Progressive Usenet Newsgroup,

Continued from page 1

move past their fear or lethargy and take action to discover this disease in themselves as early as possible with the hope of thereby saving lives. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has declared breast cancer an epidemic and no woman is immune from it. Some eighty percent of all women diagnosed with breast cancer have no history of the disease in their families. The older a woman gets, the more vulnerable she is. But the incidence is rising among young women and therefore women in their twenties and thirties should definitely be doing breast self exam and having any lumps or problems checked medically.

The Breast Health Project offers free or low cost medical services to women with no health insurance who are over forty years old, or have a known risk factor for breast cancer (such as a family history of the disease).

Breast Health Clinics are held in Greenfield and Northampton. Women can opt to have comprehensive physicals with basic lab work (including a pap smear) or simply clinical breast exams. Where appropriate, women are referred for free mammograms at local hospitals or free surgical consultations or biopsies for breast problems.

The Breast Health Project also houses a Lesbian Education And Health (LEAH) program component. Lesbians as a group may be at higher risk for breast cancer and may have the disease diagnosed at a later stage. The most common risk factor is that some 70% haven't given birth; this risk factor raises the risk of any woman for breast cancer. An important reason for late diagnosis is lack of access to the health care system due to lack of money and/or fear of homophobia in that system, or simply lack of belief in that system. For those reasons the Breast Health Project has established LEAH to serve lesbi-

ans both in our education and medical components.

In order to draw attention to the issue, October has been designated National Breast Cancer Awareness Month for several years. This year October 19 has been declared the first annual National Mammography Day, and it is hoped that many women over 40 will take advantage of reduced cost mammograms at local accredited facilities. The Breast Health Project has a list of Western Massachusetts mammography facilities which have been accredited by the American College of Radiology and are therefore considered by most experts to be the safest facilities. There will also be a number of media presentations about breast cancer during the month and I encourage women to pay attention to them. There is a great deal to learn on the subject and the information you gain will almost surely be useful to you one day; if not yourself, someone you know will be diagnosed

with breast cancer. It is estimated that 1.6 million women in the U.S. are knowingly living with the disease now and that another 1.0 million are living with it but don't yet know it.

If you would like more information about the Breast Health Project or want to schedule an educational event, call (413) 586-2016. If you would like to schedule a medical visit in Northampton call (413) 586-2539 or in Greenfield call (413) 773-5403.

Note: The facts in this article are from a fact sheet prepared by The Massachusetts Department of Public Health Breast Cancer Initiative.

Anne Perkins is the Health Education Coordinator of the Breast Health Project of the Family Planning Council of Western Massachusetts.

WOMEN IN PRISON continued

Aileen Wuornos continued

me "One day she loves us, the next day she hates us." In light of this, she said that the group has decided to continue as a group anyway, because there are "larger issues involved." She was referring to the plight of Dykes in the criminal justice system in general. When I expressed concern for Aileen herself, the woman suggested that I contact a prisoners rights organization. What I've noticed is that they continue to use Wuornos' name in their group's title. This woman also claimed that she did not really know who this Aileen Wuornos Support Committee was, but that they had not been endorsed by Aileen Wuornos. Both groups, however, on their literature listed the same address which is the Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center in New York City. It is beginning to look to me like feminists involved in this case are leaving themselves open to the criticism that they are using Wuornos, and her name, for their own purposes. I am also concerned firstly that they will be accused of continuing the abuse done by the media, the courts, her family, and her johns, and secondly that NO ONE IS SUPPORTING AILEEN HERSELF!

This realization made me wonder about my own interest in the story. I had heard a little about it, read the literature at the New York Gay Pride march, and thought it would be important to let people know about this "lesbian on death row." Well, it turns out that, contrary to her media portrayal, Aileen chooses *not* to identify as a lesbian, and that the woman she was involved with testified *against* her in the trial. The more I read, the more I realized that many lesbians and feminists had a lot to say about this case, but that few were actually doing direct support work for this former prostitute and terribly abused woman who is currently on death row. This is why I have decided to write about supporting women prisoners. I do not want to be a part of the media exploitation that continues to victimize Wuornos by using her or her name for their own purposes.

If there is one thing that feminism and specifically the battered women's movement has taught me, it's that in order to support any woman through any crisis it is necessary to come from a genuine place of solidarity and respect for that woman; to really *listen* to her and believe what she tells you. Otherwise, that support is little more than condescending charity work, and exists more to make the supporter feel good, than to actu-

ally support the woman. In order to be sincere, we must identify with Aileen Wuornos, and recognize that she could have been any one of us, or our sister, or our best friend, or our lesbian lover. Many of us were sexually abused as children, and many abused young women end up turning to prostitution as an escape from their abusive families.

So, how *do* we support women in prison?

We must assume Wuornos is the expert in her situation

Well, there's really no big mystery to it. It's a matter of writing to the woman, and asking them what she needs, and respecting her replies. (Same deal as supporting battered women, same deal as supporting your friends through whatever crises they experience.) We must assume that the woman is the expert in her situation, and never take advantage of a woman who needs support by thinking this is an opportunity to be able to tell her what to do. Remember, an abused woman has no reason to believe that you don't want to abuse her also, and this may be a problem that some of the women working with Wuornos had. Building trust takes a long time. However, most prisoners enjoy getting mail, so making a commitment to have a relationship through the mail is a good way to start, provided the person you are writing to wants that.

In the broader picture, it is useful to become aware of the prisoner's rights and prison abolition movements, and to learn about the situations of the political prisoners in the United States. It's staggering to realize the extent of the injustice and abuse (including sexual abuse) that people experience at the hands of the court and prison system, yet it is a reality of our society, and one that feminists should not turn away from. If we are seriously committed to the fight for women's lives and against injustice.

Aileen has specifically requested stamps, and commissary money, sent in the form of a money order, so this is a concrete way that we could help her. These can be sent to:

Aileen Wuornos
A150924 DR#1
Broward Correctional Institution
PO Box 8540
Pembroke Pines, Florida 33024

NOTES:

*For an excellent discussion of the Aileen Wuornos' situation and legal status, see *off our backs*, Vol. xxiii, number 6, June 1993.

** Phyllis Chesler, *St. John's Law Review*, Vol. 66, Number 4, winter 1993.

Resistance continued

1,900 women, in the largest woman's prison in the world, rushing to the units to try and get a few things done before the 4 p.m. count. On this Thursday, instead, it was like gridlock: everyone moved slowly, if at all, waiting to see what would happen.

At 4 p.m., an announcement ordered us all to go inside for the count. Many did, but ninety of us stayed out, moving into the center of the Park. We sang Bob Marley's "Stand Up For Your Rights", and chanted "Stop Police Brutality", "We Want Justice", "Let Them Out of Seg", and "Figueroa (the lieutenant) must go". Ringed by guards—including a S.O.R.T. (SWAT) team in full regalia—we demanded to speak to the Captain. While we demonstrated we heard shouts of support from the windows of the housing units and at least two "all available officers" codes to different units—meaning that the women who had returned to the units for count were doing some kind of support actions too.

We had to shout the Captain down when he finally came to talk to us, because he was telling too many lies. He finally said the lieutenant would be back at work on Monday, and we all knew there was no point in any further discussion. We were handcuffed and escorted to seg—most of us being taken to the old High Security Unit, which has been out of use almost entirely since the BOP was forced to close it in 1988. Seven women, to a cell, no blankets, no water—it was payback time.

The next day, twelve of us were taken out and chained up on a bus to Marianna, Florida (the new women's high security unit). As each of us was taken out of prison the whole place was locked down. But it was midday, so there were over 100 women in Central Park on their lunch breaks.

As each of us was escorted through the Park, we were cheered—loudly, enthusiastically, joyfully—by everyone there. I've since learned that while we were in transit to Marianna, a smaller group of women repeated the action in Central Park at 4 p.m. There were also quite a few small fires set in various housing units during the

night. And a number of women were shipped out to Pleasanton after we twelve were shipped here to Marianna.

It was the first active resistance in a federal women's prison in the U.S. in twenty years.

For a few brief moments, we felt free. As we moved into Central Park, defying the daily, grinding regulations and control of prison life, we were liberated of the fear that holds prisoners in check. We had the power of justice on our side—and in our eyes as we looked at one another.

The most common thing you hear people say at Lexington is: "If the men (prisoners—the prison used to be co-ed) were here, the police wouldn't get away with this. Women don't stick together, so the prison can put anything they want on us."

We proved that's not true. The racism and brutality that go down everyday just didn't go down on this day. We'd had enough and we trusted and respected ourselves and one another enough to stand up together. The demonstration was international—inspired primarily by Jamaican, Haitian, and African-American women, it was joined by Latina women and some white women as well. It was clear, for once, that if the police could continue to attack Black women (as they do everyday—for example, at any given time

the hole holds more Black women than any other nationality), then no one would be safe.

Anger is a constant reality in prison, and the entire system is designed to ensure that such anger is turned inwards, destroying one's self-respect and humanity, instead of being turned outwards towards the system and the oppressors. It took courage to resist all that, in the context of the total control, abuse and

disrespect of women that constitutes women's prison. We had to trust each other, that we would not be standing there alone. As we looked around at one another we knew our demonstration was a victory, no matter what punishment might follow. A small flame of power, sisterhood, and dignity had been kindled.

Laura Whitehorn is an Anti-Imperialist Political Prisoner

"For a few brief moments, we felt free. As we moved into central park, defying the daily grinding regulations and control of prison life, we were liberated of the fear that holds prisoners in check."

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Survivor's Bulletin Board

Believe The Children's Second Annual National Conference on the Ritual Abuse of Children entitled *Ritual Child Abuse: Disclosures in the 80's, Backlash in the 90's* To be held June 10-12, 1994, at the Woodfield Hilton & Tower, Arlington Heights, IL

Call For:

Workshop Proposals Deadline: September 1, 1994

Artwork-Creative Healing: An art exhibit of Adults & Children recovering from Ritual Abuse -Deadline to receive slides: March 1, 1994.

Believe The Children is the international, grassroots non-profit organization founded in 1986 by parents of children victimized in extra-familial, multi-victim, multi-perpetrator settings. We represent parents and professionals throughout the nation who have shared the frustration of trying to cope with a problem that was virtually unrecognized until 1983 when cases began to emerge across the country with startling similarities.

Purpose:

To develop an organization of concerned professionals and citizens to address the sexual and ritual exploitation of children.

Objectives:

1. To promote research and heighten public and professional awareness of abuse that involves extra-familial, multi-perpetrator, multi-victim elements. It is essential that credible research and thorough documentation be made available to ensure accurate prosecution, public education and adequate prevention programs.

2. To assemble, integrate and disseminate information in a manner that will protect families from exploitation and will avoid sensationalism.

3. To join together with other victimized families to be able to deal openly with the children's experience through mutual support.

4. To lobby professionals in the medical, criminal justice, and helping professions to deal openly with the issue for the sake of all

children.

For more information and/or instruction forms contact:

Believe The Children
(708) 515-5432
PO Box 268462
Chicago, IL 60626

CALL FOR ARTWORK:

BELIEVE THE CHILDREN, The National Non-profit Organization dedicated to addressing the issues of the ritualistic exploitation of small children, will present

Creative Healing- An Art Exhibit of Adults and Children Recovering from Sadistic Ritual Abuse

To be shown at the 2nd Annual National Conference on the Ritual Abuse of Children: June 10-12, 1994

ELIGIBILITY:

The exhibition is open to all both Children and Adults who survived Sadistic Ritual Abuse. Survivors are invited to submit:

1. Up to 15 slides, clearly numbered 1-15. The slides DO NOT have to be taken by a professional. Just use your own camera, make sure you can see your work clearly when the slide is shown. Send the Slides to: Vicky Polin, M. A., 1994 Art Exhibit coordinator, Believe The Children, PO Box 268462, Chicago, IL 60626.

2. Write your name on each slide! Use a pseudonym if you want. Please include your legal name (and your child's), phone number and address on a separate piece of paper. This will make contacting you easier.

3. Slides should be placed inside a clear plastic slide sheet. This can be purchased at almost any art supply or camera store.

4. Include a type description of each slide (by number). This will be displayed along with your work or your child's. Include your name, the title of your work (if it has one) and it's suggested to briefly explain the significance each piece has had on you/your child's personal healing/recovery process.

Some Notes on Abuse

by a Lesbian Survivor for Lesbian Survivors

by G.I. (Girl Insurrection)

Survivors of cult-organized ritualized sexual abuse, or cult gynocide, or girl genocide are surviving oppression, a systematic structure meant to mold and press the tortured (us) into a lifetime of service to men and family. This gynocide is, in fact a femicidal Holocaust, with millions of us disappearing each year, killed or starved as infants, raped and tortured as very young girls to season us for use in men's main multinational: the international traffic in women via pornography and prostitution networks, involving men in every society at the highest levels of that society.

For the oppressed, for both acknowledging and unacknowledging survivors, this oppression causes deep emotional pain, rage, sadness, despair, patterns of self-destructiveness and self-abuse, the sabotage of connections with oneself and fellow Dykes (fragmentation) and suicidal despair. For survivors of this abuse, knowing is always better than not knowing. Knowing is a tremendous relief because all those years of feeling crazy, nervous, sad, terrified, paranoid, alone, like no one understands, finally, oh finally, there's a reason for the pain and sorrow and confusion. The total manipulation and deliberate fragmentation, the literal breaking of girl spirit and being through rape, torture, brainwashing and forced participation in murder and other atrocities has caused us to lose ourselves, yes, and some of us gone forever

but the point is: this shit is not us. WE ARE NOT THE SUM OF WHAT'S BEEN DONE TO US.

Each cell of our body holds within its tiny core the memory of all the other cells; each of us has survived whole. That's the crux of our struggle: finding our whole true selves through the morass of necrophilic garbage implanted in our girlhood psyches, quite literally imprinted upon our bodies.

Suicide is not an option or choice. Wanting to suicide is not truly us; the impulse to suicide is not a real and authentic reflection of Dyke being because the essence of Dyke being is Dyke loving, of our autonomous beautiful Dyke selves first and then the Dykes and Dyke communities that each of us chooses to befriend across the boundaries of patriarchally-defined space and time.

The impulse to suicide is a programmed response to what's been done to us; we are brainwashed to ensure the protection of cult hierarchies by killing ourselves. As Audre Lorde wrote so eloquently: we were never meant to survive. That doesn't mean, however, that we can't or won't or aren't surviving. Whole.

Stay sane, Dykes; unwind the knots of yr herstory; don't disconnect; know there are Dykes who love and care for you. Stay on the planet. No matter what they have done we still emerge strong; we are still more powerful in our gravitations to freedom and joy and self-love, the constant pull of our true natures beckoning us back to ourselves.

Children: (708) 515-5432.

7. It will be your responsibility to drop-off and pick-up your artwork at the hotel before and after the conference. If you are unable to do this, you can still submit your slides and description to be included in the continuous slide presentation. Believe The Children can not take responsibility for losses or damages to your work or slides.

8. Deadline for submitting slides is March 1, 1994.

simple

after a kiss, we cleave

our lips like two sweet sections

of fruit, this meeting of the ways

is never simple. it is complex

for you to touch my hair,

even after four years, i fear touch

sleeting down like bullets

across my body, but what i want

is simple. to want you

as plainly as i would walk

into green water on a dry

afternoon. to stride into you

like i would glide onto a dance floor

letting music wash my bones

down to the glittering marrow,

to dance slow on a shiny black floor,

the soft edges of our reflection

a kind of merging i could never

muster otherwise. i will be honest,

often, i would rather eat, sleep,

or balance my check book

than make love to you.

but its nothing personal;

when i was three years old,

my mother left me at home

with my father when she went to teach

sunday school. he climbed

into my bed, pulled the blue

blanket with the stiff satin border

up over my head, and what follows

is a loss of memory,

a kind of darkness

one spends an entire lifetime

trying to poke through.

and there's more, every day

my father watched me

wash the dishes, burned little holes

in my body with his eyes

till i was perforated as a colander

trickling out glistening water

from every silver pore, each day,

he lay his hand like a flat iron

across my ass, in a little smack,

till steam swirled up my body

fogging me.

there are women who discuss

their desire at parties, dinners

and at work, and it seems

it is cut from the same red fabric

as one would use to cut

a simple dress, or a sturdy apron

for cooking, they talk about their breakfasts

in bed, slipping nipples easy

as red apples into mouths,

biting the hard heft of sex

like baring down on a peach

to reach its simple corrugated center,

i am tired of trying

to keep up: tired of lying

about sex, lying

that it was good, lying that

it was bad. i lie

to simplify, like tearing

out a complex tangle of weeds

to expose one simple black berry

shimmering like a meteor

fallen in the grass. i lie when

i say there is nothing there

and i lie when i make it sound easy

to get to. the truth is, i want

to want you as simply

as i would go after

this fruit, running

through the woods

thirsty with scraped knees

digging through what ever

thorns and bramble

to get down to you,

Chaila Heller

Calendar

October 15

Reading: Local poet Chaia Heller and recently published novelist Hilary Mullins will read works celebrating not only women's survival from sexual oppression, but the passion and creativity that emerges out of our resistance. At Lunaria, 90 King Street, Northampton at 7:00 pm, women only. (413) 586-7851

October 15-16

Theater: "1992, Blood Speaks", a New World Theater production by the Colorado Sisters (Coatlicue Sisters). The Colorado Sisters, four Native American women celebrate the 500th anniversary of Columbus with anguish. This is a story of crowded reservations, lack of education and land, and phony treaties. At 8:00 pm, Hampden Theater, UMass, \$3.00 students, \$5.00 public.

October 15-16

Conference: PAWSS student conference "Environmental Change and Violent Conflict." Keynote speech is at 7:30 pm, October 15, at Amherst College Converse Assembly Room. Workshops are on October 16 from 9:00-5:00 in Converse Hall. Register in Converse Lobby. Conference is free and open to five college students. For more information, call 582-5519.

October 16

Lecture: "Feminism Among Women of Color in the Americas." Dr. Celia Alvarez speaks about social contributions of feminist women of color to national and international concerns. At Hampshire College, Ruth Hammen Auditorium, Adele Simmons Hall from 2:30-3:30 pm.

October 16

Poetry Reading: "Judy Grahn: Friends and Lovers" an evening of poetry and electric sound by Judy Grahn, author of *Another Mother Tongue: Gay Words, Gay Worlds*, and *Edward the Dyke*. will read at 8:00 pm at UMass Bowker Auditorium. \$3.00 UMass students, \$6.00 public. Sponsored by the Program for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Concerns, (413) 545-4824.

October 17

Dance: "Portraits." Notable women of the past come alive in a program of solo dances

choreographed and performed by Rebecca Nordstrom, Hampshire College faculty, and Jill Becker, Jill Becker & Dancers. \$4.00, students, \$6.00, public, reservations recommended. For information call. 582-5446.

October 17

Lecture: Judith Plaskow, professor of Religious Studies at Manhattan College will speak on "The Role of Women in the Jewish Tradition," at 11:00 am, Amherst College, Converse Hall, Porter Lounge.

October 21

Reading: Prolific lesbian poet, novelist and performance artist Judy Grahn will read from and sign her latest work *Blood, Bread and Roses: How Menstruation Created the World*. At Lunaria, 90 King Street, Northampton, at 7:00 pm.

October 21

Reading and Booksigning: Adrienne Rich will be celebrating the 2nd Anniversary of the five College Women's Studies Research Center. At Mount Holyoke College, Dickinson House, at 6:30 pm. For more information call 538-2022.

October 21

Workshop: "What's sex got to do with it? Power relations between the genders in the GLB community." A workshop presented by Dvora Zipkin and Matt Oullett, 7:00-9:00 pm at the UMass Campus Center. This event is sponsored by the Program for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Concerns, (413) 545-4824.

October 22-30

Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Awareness Days, BGLAD. Look for specially scheduled educational and cultural events celebrating gay, lesbian, and bisexual communities.

October 22

Concert: Ani DiFranco performs at UMass Bowker Auditorium at 8:00 pm as part of her "The Thar She Blows Tour '93. Arrg." Tickets are available in advance, \$5.00 for UMass students, \$8.00 for the public, and at the door, \$7.00 for UMass students, \$10.00 for the public. Tickets available at the Fine Arts Center Box Office, Monday-Friday, 10-4, or call 545-2511.

October 25

Lecture: Chaia Heller an ecofeminist educator/activist, will discuss "The Ecology of Gender - Why a Nature-Hating Society Hates Lesbians and Gays." From 7:30-9:00 pm, UMass Campus Center Room 101.

October 26

Lecture: Elias Farajaje-Jones, a professor of Religious Studies at Howard University, presents the keynote speech of BGLAD week: "Bi the way, Is anyone listening? Racism, Gynophobia, and Heterosexism." At 8:00 pm UMass Student Union Ballroom.

October 28

Self Defense Training Against Homophobic Violence for Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals, presented by Janet Aalfs and Rachel Broudy of the Valley Women's martial Arts. 3:00-5:00 pm, UMass Campus Center Room 174.

October 28

Lecture: Professor Dessima Williams Of Brandeis University will speak on "Women and Development in the 1990s," as part of the PAWSS Lecture Series, at 7:30 pm, Smith College, McConnel room 103.

October 28-30

Theater: "Commie Lesbos from Outer Space" a hilarious one-woman show by New York-based performance artist Anne Biegel. 8:00 pm UMass Hampden Theater, \$3.00 UMass students, \$6.00 public.

October 30

Conference: Mexico: Beyond NAFTA. Conference on the potential effects of the North American Free Trade Agreement on Mexico. Panels on political, economic, environmental, anthropological, agricultural/rural and other issues. From Mexico: Luis Hernandez, tri-national coalitions among farm organizations; Carlos Salas, employment issues in Mexico. Plenary 9:00-10:45, Memorial Hall; panels 11:00-12:30 and 1:45-3:15 Campus Center. Plenary 3:30-4:45 Memorial Hall; reception 5:00 Campus Center. Events are free, and take place at UMass. Sponsored by Five College Latin American Studies and others. FMI call 545-4648.

November 6

Auction: Valley Women's Martial Arts invites the public to a benefit Arts and Services

Auction on Saturday, 2:30-5:30 pm on the lawn of the Unitarian Society (inside in case of rain) Main Street, Northampton. This event is being held to raise funds for student scholarships and will include the auction as well as demonstrations of self defense and martial arts by teachers and students of the school. If you have services and/or artwork to donate, please call the school by October 15. Valley Women's Martial Arts is at One Cottage Street (Rt 141) in Easthampton, (413) 527-0101.

November 9

Potluck and Auction: Each year P-FLAG PIONEER VALLEY (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) sponsors a Holiday potluck dinner. This year's event will be at 6:30 pm in the Grace Episcopal Church Parish Hall, Spring Street in Amherst. There will also be a silent auction to benefit the National P-FLAG Federation. Items and services are being solicited for the auction. For more information, call (508) 867-7437.

November 10

Lecture: Bonnie Strickland, professor of Psychology at UMass Amherst, will talk about "Planning a course in Lesbian Studies" as part of the Brown Bag Lecture Series sponsored by the Program for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Concerns. The event will be at UMass Campus Center Room 811 from 12:00-1:30.

November 12

Discussion: Elaine Eiker and Sapphire discuss their book *Keep Simple Ceremonies*. Selected from over 12 years of rituals in the Feminist Spiritual Community in Portland, Maine, these ceremonies celebrate the stages of women's lives, their decisions, fears longings, aspirations, and their work for social justice. For women only, at Lunaria, 90 King Street in Northampton, at 7:00 pm.

November 18-20

Theater: "Bacchae" by Hampshire Independent Productions, directed by Rachel Sledd. In this new production of Euripides, the Bacchae becomes the vision of a modern woman trapped in the cycles of a destructive marriage. To escape, she submerges herself in a dream world where she discovers the ancient struggle between the god Dionysus and the King of Thebes. At 8:00 pm, Hampden Theater, UMass. \$3.00 for students, \$5.00 for the public.

Continued from page 1

move past their fear or lethargy and take action to discover this disease in themselves as early as possible with the hope of thereby saving lives. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has declared breast cancer an epidemic and no woman is immune from it. Some eighty percent of all women diagnosed with breast cancer have no history of the disease in their families. The older a woman gets, the more vulnerable she is. But the incidence is rising among young women and therefore women in their twenties and thirties should definitely be doing breast self exam and having any lumps or problems checked medically.

The Breast Health Project offers free or low cost medical services to women with no health insurance who are over forty years old, or have a known risk factor for breast cancer (such as a family history of the disease). Breast Health Clinics are held in Greenfield and Northampton. Women can opt to have comprehensive physicals with basic lab work (including a pap smear) or simply clinical breast exams. Where appropriate, women are referred for free mammograms at local hospitals or free surgical consultations or biopsies

for breast problems.

The Breast Health Project also houses a Lesbian Education And Health (LEAH) program component. Lesbians as a group may be at higher risk for breast cancer and may have the disease diagnosed at a later stage. The most common risk factor is that some 70% haven't given birth; this risk factor raises the risk of any woman for breast cancer. An important reason for late diagnosis is lack of access to the health care system due to lack of money and/or fear of homophobia in that system, or simply lack of belief in that system. For those reasons the Breast Health Project has established LEAH to serve lesbians both in our education and medical components.


In order to draw attention to the issue, October has been designated National Breast Cancer Awareness Month for several years. This year October 19 has been declared the first annual National Mammography Day, and it is hoped that many women over 40 will take advantage of reduced cost mammograms at local accredited facilities. The Breast Health Project has a list of Western Massachusetts mammography facilities which have been accredited by the American College of Radiology and are therefore considered by most

experts to be the safest facilities. There will also be a number of media presentations about breast cancer during the month and I encourage women to pay attention to them. There is a great deal to learn on the subject and the information you gain will almost surely be useful to you one day; if not yourself, someone you know will be diagnosed with breast cancer. It is estimated that 1.6 million women in the U.S. are knowingly living with the disease now and that another 1.0 million are living with it but don't yet know it.

If you would like more information about the Breast Health Project or want to schedule an educational event, call (413) 586-2016. If you would like to schedule a medical visit in Northampton call (413) 586-2539 or in Greenfield call (413) 773-5403.

Note: The facts in this article are from a fact sheet prepared by The Massachusetts Department of Public Health Breast Cancer Initiative.

Anne Perkins is the Health Education Coordinator of the Breast Health Project of the Family Planning Council of Western Massachusetts.



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VOICES FROM THE GRAND CANYON
BY BERNIE AND MIRANDA

Happy Autumn, everyone! For those of you who don't already know and for those of you who like to be reminded, "Rude Gals" is a column where you can write about your every day bravery, when it comes to coping with sexist jerks, or just having to cope with obnoxious assumptions that others have toward you. Graphics or cartoons are welcome, too. Bernie and I started this column because we wanted to celebrate our self assertiveness. We also want to expand our repertoire of responses to the challenges we face as women. So if you have a good story of something you have done, or have wanted to do, write us at The Valley Women's Voice, 321 Student Union Building, University of Massachusetts, Amherst MA 01003. We'd love to hear from you. We send all of our contributors a small, laminated comic, which is something to look forward to.

Dear Nasties,

I don't, in my life dedicated to peace, find myself generally inclined to think violent thoughts. However, the other day when I was out running, I ran past this old guy who was generally disgusting. He said in a raw, gravelly voice, "Hey, I'll run with you, heh-heh!" Before I could think about it, I found myself retorting in a voice that mimicked his, "Hey, I'll chop off your member!"

A few days after that, I was jogging across the street because the "Don't Walk" sign was blinking. Some jerk yelled from his car, "WEAR A BRA!" I was angry, but I didn't even look to see who it was. I fumed all the rest of the way to work, thinking I should have punched him in his stupid face, killed him, or broken his car with my bare hands, at least said something like, "GET A RASH!" I ended up talking about it with some women at work, who had their own stories to share and so could commiserate. One suggested getting license plate numbers and reporting such idiots whenever possible. She made the point that when enough women report such things, at least the police have a record. I hate getting yelled at on the street.

Signed,

At Least I Have A Life

Yep. You're also learning how to negotiate safety, and to consider demanding it, in your life. It's difficult to establish a peaceful existence in the face of so much outright, not to mention of course, subtle violence against women in our society. Finding new and constructive ways to respond to implicit and explicit violence takes great effort, thought and skill. It's worth it to take the time to



think about it. I'm sick of being afraid of things that many men don't even think twice about, like just walking alone down the street.

To the two Rude Ones:

Here's the rudeness I thought of after the fact. I was in a waiting room wearing this really cute outfit. The shorts were bright and just above my knees and looked like a skirt. A woman said, "I like your outfit." I said, "Thanks." I walked by a man who was sitting down. He said, "Is that a skirt or shorts?" "GROSS!" I thought. "GROSS DISGUSTING I walk by a guy and he wants to look up my skirt unless they're shorts, GROSS!" I said, "Uh, bleh, uh, I'm not going to say. Uh, bleh, bleck." As an afterthought, I wanted to say, "Hey my skirt or shorts are not your business!"

Sincerely,

Short & Sweet

(my shorts and the rude comments I need to use when I wear them)

Sorry that you had to go through that annoying experience, girlfriend. I often wish myself that men would just get a clue when it comes to commenting on women's appearances. Meaning, of course, that they would just stop making personal comments to women they don't know. I personally am Just Not Interested in what some random male thinks about my appearance.

"Rude Girls" is a registered trademark and we're using it with permission of the owners. It's not like we're making money off of it or anything.

See ya next issue! Don't forget to write!

Love, Bernie and Miranda





ANNOUNCEMENTS



Wanted: Submissions sought for an anthology of **WOMEN WRITING ON ADOPTION**, edited by Susan Wadia-Ells, to be published by Seal Press in 1994. Because adoption is never a simple act, the anthology will look at the economic, spiritual, psychological, cultural, political racial, herstorical and social aspects of adoption from the birth mother's, adoptive mother's, daughter's, grandmother's and other points of view. Fiction and non-fiction will be considered, no poetry please. Deadline is December 15, 1993. Manuscript pages should be typed, double-spaced, and numbered. Include a brief biography, and two SASE to:
Susan Wadia-Ells
PO Box 401
Putney, VT 05346

Writer's Guidelines are available free from *Short Fiction By Women*. Also, until February 1, writers can obtain two sample copies of the publication for the price of one (\$6.00). To obtain guidelines, writers should send a #10 SASE with one first-class stamp. Send all correspondence to:
Rachel Whalen, Editor
Short Fiction By Women
Box 1276
Stuyvesant Station
New York, NY 10009

Lesbian Book Catalog Available: *Heartland Books*, a company run by two Vermont women, has announced the arrival of the second *Heartland Books* catalog. Linda Weiss and Joyce McKeeman of East Corinth, VT are offering a wide variety of lesbian and feminist reading by mail. The new 16-page annotated and illustrated *Heartland* catalog contains approximately 125 book selections, covering such categories as fiction, biography, relationships, erotica and sexuality. In addition the new catalog will feature a fine selection of lesbian and feminist wall calendars and datebooks. Linda and Joyce are distributing the catalog free upon request. They can be reached at:
PO Box 1105F
East Corinth, VT 05040

Call for Submissions to *Women and Recovery: surviving, thriving and reclaiming your body, mind and spirit*, a 48 page quarterly

magazine that encourages, supports, and informs women who are confronting physical, emotional or spiritual challenges such as heart disease, cancer, bipolar disease, lupus, prescription drug abuse, alcoholism, spinal cord injury, eating disorders, rape, incest and chronic fatigue syndrome. *Women and Recovery* is seeking manuscripts related to women's recovery issues. Query by mail only, with published clips. Send materials to: Need To Know Press
PO Box 161775
Cupertino, CA 95016

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Youth Project of the Pioneer Valley offers services for teens who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or questioning their sexual orientation. Some of the services offered include: a support group and activity program, AIDS and safer sex information, and a mentor program. Based in Northampton, the Youth Project welcomes any teen under 19 to join us at our regular meetings. If you would like more information, call the 24 hr. answering machine at (413) 584-4213.

Battering Does Happen in Lesbian Relationships. Are you being battered? Do you wonder if you are being battered? Call NELCWIT's hotline at (413) 772-0806 for support, information, counseling, or shelter.

A Support Group for Battered Lesbians will be starting soon for lesbians who are being battered or have been battered in the past. The group is free, and the building is wheelchair accessible. For more information, call NELCWIT at (413) 772-0806.

The Program for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Concerns offers variety of services to the lesbian, gay and bisexual community, as well as to the population at large. The Speaker's Bureau provides trained speakers to discuss issues such as coming out, homophobia, and heterosexism, with people in residence halls, academic courses, the Greek area, and the local community. The program also sponsors the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Studies Brown Bag Lunch Series, which features seminars each Wednesday at noon on a variety of gay studies topics. The Program also provides support and referral to victims of harassment and discrimination. Addition-

ally, the Program sponsors a monthly Cafe Series which highlights both local and national performers.

The Breast Health Project of the Family Planning Council of Western Massachusetts provides free of low cost medical services to women with no health insurance who are forty or older or who have a family history of or symptoms of breast disease. Medical services, provided in Northampton and Greenfield include: comprehensive physical exams by a nurse practitioner, routine lab work, and by referral, mammograms, aspiration, and biopsy. The program also has a community education component, as well as a Lesbian Education and Health (LEAH) component, geared to the specific needs of lesbians. For more information, call (413) 586-2016 or 1-800-750-2016

Accessibility: *The Valley Women's Voice* would like to be accessible on tape to women who are visually impaired or otherwise reading or print disabled. If you or someone you know would benefit from this service, or if you would like to volunteer to read the paper on tape, please contact Dena at *The Voice*, at 545-2436.

Meeting Times:

Bisexual Feminist Women's Discussion Group: Meets in Northampton every other Tuesday. Meetings are open to interested bisexual women. A diverse group has been meeting for almost a year. FMI call 586-4685 (no discretion necessary).

The Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community Center general meetings are the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm at the Unitarian Meeting House in Northampton. FMI call 585-0683.

PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 at Grace Episcopal Church Parish Hall, Spring Street, Amherst, and the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at Faith United Church, Springfield. Wheelchair accessible. FMI call 532-4883 or write POB 55, South Hadley, MA 01075-0055.

WAC (The Women's Action Coalition) meets Mondays, at the Haymarket Cafe, in Northampton at 6:30 pm. Women only, please. FMI, call 586-0216.

Institute for the Healing of Racism meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month from 6:30 to 8:30. FMI call Colin at 585-5887 or Gene at 256-1878.

Meetings at UMass:

UMass Lesbian, Bisexual Women's Union meets on Mondays at the LBGA office, room 413B in the Student Union Building, UMass. Call 545-0154 for meeting times.

LBGA Infosocial happens every Tuesday from 7-9 pm at the UMass Campus Center room 905 (usually- check schedule by the elevators) Newcomers always welcome.

LBGA Political Caucus meets Thursdays at 8 pm in room 413 B Student Union Building (LBGA office) at UMass.

The Bi Rap Group meets on Wednesdays in the LBGA office, room 413B Student Union Building, UMass. Call 545-0154 for information and meeting times.

Support Groups:

Support Group for Lesbians with Cancer and Other Immune Systems Diseases and Their Partners: Founded by the Valley Women's Health Project, meets in Amherst at the Bangs Community Center on Boltwood Walk on the second Tuesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 pm. FMI call Ruth Rae at 548-9431 or Anne Perkins at (508) 544-6385.

Women Incest Survivors Support Group: This group allows women incest survivors to come together and share experiences with incest and the impact it has had, and continues to have on survivors' lives. Meetings are Monday nights from 7:00-9:30 in Seelye Hall Second floor Lounge, Smith College. FMI call Laura at 584-5039.

Menopause Informal Support Group: Meets monthly. Call Kate, 584-2669.

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ART CLASSES with Paula Gottlieb October 30, 10 am-1pm; *No Fear of Drawing* - Beginning drawing presented in an atmosphere of encouragement and support. November 20, 10 am-4 pm; *Watercolor for Advanced Beginners*. FMI: (413) 665-7215.

Lesbian Retreat Come celebrate the 3rd Annual Lesbian Retreat with Arinna Wiesman on October 29-31 in Deerfield MA. \$100.00. FMI call Ann, 586-6005.

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